

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 05708 141308Z

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ACTION SS-14

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O R 141221Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4450
INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY
CHMAAG TEHRAN IRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 5708

FROM AMBASSADOR HUMMEL TO UNDER SECRETARY SISCO AND UNDER
SECRETARY MAW

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS PFOR ET US
SUBJECT: AVAILABILITY OF F-5A AIRCRAFT FOR ETHIOPIA

REF: (A) ADDIS 4935; (B) MAAG TEHRAN 131031Z MAY 75;
(C) STATE 100755

1. IN VIEW OF THE GREAT IMPORTANCE WHICH THE EPMG ATTACHES TO THE ARRIVAL OF F-5A AIRCRAFT IN MAY OR JUNE (REFTEL A), THE SCHEDULE IN REFTEL B INDICATING AVAILABILITY FOR ETHIOPIA OF ALL BUT ONE SUCH AIRCRAFT IN NOVEMBER CAUSES ME VERY GREAT CONCERN. OUR INFORMATION HERE REGARDING RELATIVE PRIORITIES IS OF COURSE VERY LIMITED BUT I WOULD HOPE THAT THE DEPARTMENT WOULD VIGOROUSLY PURSUE THE POSSIBILITY OF MAKING SOME SHIFTS IN THE PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF DELIVERIES TO ETHIOPIA'S ADVANTAGE. IN THIS CONNECTION WE NOTE THAT EMBASSY TEHRAN HAS NOT YET RESPONDED TO REFTEL C. WE BELIEVE THE QUESTIONS SET FORTH BELOW PARTICULARLY NEED CONSIDERATION.

2. IN VIEW OF THE MORE SOPHISTICATED AIRCRAFT WHICH JORDAN AL-
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PAGE 02 ADDIS 05708 141308Z

READY POSSESSES, DOES IT REALLY NEED THE F-5A'S WITH SUCH HIGH

PRIORITY THAT IT MUST RECEIVE THEM IN MAY? THEIR ARRIVAL HERE IN MAY HAS BEEN STRONGLY REQUESTED BY EPMG LEADERS AND BY THIS MISSION.

3. IS IT REALLY NECESSARY TO HAVE THE LONG GAP FROM MAY TO OCTOBER ON THE F-5A AVAILABILITY? WE WOULD HOPE THAT VIGOROUS RENEGOTIATIONS WITH THE IRANIANS MIGHT MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO CLOSE THIS GAP.

4. DOES IT MAKE SENSE TO SCHEDULE THE F-5A DELIVERIES FOR KENYA AHEAD OF THOSE FOR ETHIOPIA? ALTHOUGH BOTH COUNTRIES FEAR THE SAME THREAT, ETHIOPIA HAS BEEN CLAMORING FOR ADDITIONAL AIRCRAFT FOR CONSIDERABLY LONGER THAN KENYA, AND IN CONTRAST TO KENYA HAS A LONG ESTABLISHED DEPENDENCY ON THE U.S. FOR ITS AIRCRAFT. MOREOVER, KENYA IS NOW -- AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE -- PRIMARILY DEPENDENT FOR ITS DEFENSE ON ETHIOPIAN CAPABILITIES. WHEN EPMG LEADERS DISCOVER, AS THEY CERTAINLY WILL, THAT KENYA HAS PRIORITY OVER ETHIOPIA ON THESE AIRCRAFT, WE CAN EXPECT THEM TO GO THROUGH THE ROOF. THEY ARE LIKELY TO HEAR OF THE EARLIER DELIVERIES TO JORDAN AND GREECE AS WELL.

5. WE NOTE WITH GREAT INTEREST THE NUMBER OF F-5B'S LISTED IN PARA 1.E OF REFTEL B. WE URGE THAT EVERY EFFORT BE MADE TO DELIVER AT LEAST ONE OF THESE TO ETHIOPIA WITH HIGH PRIORITY. WE BELIEVE THERE IS NO MILITARY EQUIPMENT A SINGLE COPY OF WHICH WOULD BE AS MUCH APPRECIATED BY THE EPMG AS THE F-5B. PMAC CHAIRMAN TEFERI BANTE STRESSED THE NEED FOR THIS AIRCRAFT IN MY MEETING WITH HIM ON APRIL 15 AND THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE CONTINUES TO GIVE IT FIRST PRIORITY IN HIS EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN TO CHMAAG.

6. I STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT EXAMINE THESE AND ANY OTHER PERTINENT ASPECTS OF THIS PROBLEM IN A STRENUOUS EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE DELIVERY DATES FOR ETHIOPIA.

7. AN EARLY REPLY WILL BE APPRECIATED.

HUMMEL

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